



## **RENTAL ASSISTANCE COUPON PLUS PROGRAM**

The Rental Assistance Coupon Plus (RAC+) program in Maine is designed to provide housing assistance for a maximum of twenty-four months and encourage self-sufficiency for homeless individuals and families. Among other things, the program offers a one-time security/utility deposit and also provides housing counselors to work with these populations to secure permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

The program began in 2002 as a pilot in the cities of Bangor and Portland. In 2003, the program expanded to also serve people in Alfred/Sanford, Lewiston/Auburn and Augusta/Waterville. In 2005, the program was allocated \$2,000,000 of HUD HOME funds that enabled a statewide expansion. The successful statewide expansion will continue in 2006 with an allocation of \$2,500,000.

Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) is working with homeless shelters, local housing authorities, social service departments, the Department of Corrections, state agencies and any other interested referral agency.

### **Eligibility**

To be eligible for RAC+, a person must:

- Be homeless for seven or more consecutive days and have a primary nighttime residence that is:
  - a shelter, welfare hotel, congregate shelter, or transitional housing
  - an institution that provides temporary residence for individuals intending to be institutionalized
  - a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings

**Note: Living with friends or relatives is NOT considered homeless.**

- If you have an income, it cannot exceed 60% of the area median income.
- You must be willing to pay the greater of 30% of adjusted total household income or \$50 for rent and utilities.
- You must be willing to enter into a "Personal Responsibility Contract" where you set and work towards goals during your participation in the program. You will also participate in a team approach with all your service providers (counselors, probation officers, caseworkers, etc.) to help you achieve your goals.
- Preferences will be given to:
  - Youth (18 to 24)
  - Families
  - Victims of domestic violence
  - Individuals referred by correctional case workers or probation officers

### **For More Information**

Contact Barbara Brann at MSHA at (207) 626-4677 or send email to [bbrann@mainehousing.org](mailto:bbrann@mainehousing.org).